GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:6350
ANSWERED ON:09.05.2005
RURAL KNOWLEDGE CENTRES
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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the salient features of the proposed Rural Knowledge Centres as recommended by the National Commission on Farmers;

(b) the type of modern information and communication technology is to be used and how the farmers are going to access it;

(c) the details of alliance of Mission 2007;

(d) the role of Department of Agriculture and Cooperation in achieving the target; and

(e) the details of the funding pattern?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA)

(a)&(b): The Village Knowledge Centres (VKCs) are envisaged to provide access to key local information on entitlements, governance and infrastructure while supporting access to dynamic information on weather, markets and on-line public services. These are also envisaged to act as retail outlets for a host of online learning, skill building, training services, providing information on employment opportunities and linkage to extension services.

(c): `National Alliance for Mission, 2007: Every Village a Knowledge Centre` has been formed to mobilize the power of partnership among the public and private sectors, academia, mass media and civil society organizations, to work together for information empowerment of farm men and women on agriculture and allied activities as also on issues related to health, education, etc.

(d): The Commission has recommended establishment of Farmers` Distress Call Centres in each State by the Department of Agriculture and Cooperation.

(e): The funding pattern suggested by the Commission in its Report is as follows:

Establishment of innovation fund for rural connectivity-Rs. 100 crore.

Incentives and tax holiday for Rural Service Providers from the USO Fund-Rs. 100 crore.

90% reduction in telecom tariff for RSPs from the USO Fund-Rs. 300 crore.

Establishment of National Digital Gateway for Rural Livelihood Security- allocation of Rs. 100 crore.

Financial support to establish Rural Knowledge Centres in each Panchayat- Rs. 50 crore.

Incentive and support to information entrepreneurs training and capacity building-Rs. 100 crore.

Setting up of 20,000 VKCs in the 150 backward districts identified for Food for Work Programme- Rs. 500 crore in the first year and support for operational costs (Rs. 1 lac per annum for each VKC over a five year period on a reducing balance of 20% every year).

Establishment of Farmers` Distress Call Centres in each State- Rs.100 crore for setting up 30 Centres.

VKC Operation-Information & Communication Technology Self Help Groups to manage and operate the VKCs (Rs. 100 crore).